



EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

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Paul Seligman, M.D., M.P.H.
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health Studies
U.S. Department of Energy
Germantown, M.D. 20874-1290

Dear Dr. Seligman:

Thank you for your continued willingness to work with the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) on the Draft Project Description for the Department of Energy's medical program in the RMI. I am very pleased to see how much progress is being made on our joint efforts to improve the medical program.

I received a copy of the version of the Draft Project Description which you provided to our Embassy last Thursday. I have some comments to make about the Draft which I hope you will consider before it is published in the Federal Register. In addition to my own comments, attached are comments which I received from the Rongelap Local Government.

My comments about the Draft are such:

1. I believe that a shift to a community-based program will decrease the amount of money that DOE will spend on its logistics contract. Therefore, I would like to see recognition that if there are any cost savings in the program, the medical program may receive larger portions of the \$6.8 million in the future;

2. There are several references to referrals to the 177 Health Care Program in the Draft. As the Rongelap community mentions, there is no point in referring patients to the 177 HCP if there is no money to treat them. There must be assurances that if patients are referred, they will be treated. There needs to be clear delineation about whose responsibility it is to ensure that patients get all of the referral care they are supposed to;

3. I am pleased to see the inclusion of non-radiogenic illnesses in the scope of work of the contractor. I think that this could be emphasized in other parts of the draft as well.

4. Ambassador deBrum shared with me the concerns he mentioned to you on Friday. I concur with his concerns about the way the clinical findings are reported. It is because the RMI Government has problems with the way

that Brookhaven has handled the medical program that the RMI Government is requesting a dramatic alteration of the program. Furthermore, considering that Secretary Pena has terminated all DOE contracts with Brookhaven, I do not think we should give any credibility to the findings of a contractor which your Secretary has rejected.

I hope your trip to the Marshall Islands is fruitful. I would be interested in hearing about your trip as I still do not know any details.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'RM' followed by a stylized flourish.

Robert Muller
Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade